

## **NORTHGATE STAKEHOLDERS GROUP MEETING SUMMARY**

**North Seattle Community College  
ED 2843A in the Dr. Peter Ku Education Building  
Tuesday, May 11, 2004, 4:30 pm – 8:00 pm**

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The Northgate Stakeholders Group (Group) held its third meeting at North Seattle Community College on Tuesday, May 11, 2004 from 4:30 pm to 8:00 pm. The purposes of the meeting were to:

- Review and approve meeting summary #2;
- Elect a Chair and Vice-Chair;
- Provide an informational presentation on King County Transit plans for Northgate;
- Discuss Northgate South Lot open space and natural drainage concepts and CTIP scoping issues; and
- Discuss the May 13 community forum and the format for stakeholders group advice to the City.

### **Welcome/Introductions/Updates**

#### ***Welcome, Interim Chair Ron LaFayette***

Ron LaFayette welcomed Stakeholders Group members and announced that Rose Dammrose had been named to serve as the alternate for the Northwest Hospital Seat.

Janice Camp, a nominee for Chair, explained that she would be unable to participate in the meeting because of a conflicting meeting. She said that she was honored to have been nominated and wanted the members to know who she is. She said she would be happy to serve if elected or to support Ron LaFayette if he were elected.

#### ***Agenda Review, Alice Shorett***

Alice Shorett, facilitator, briefly reviewed the agenda for the meeting. She pointed out that an hour was allocated for continued discussion about the Northgate South Lot open space and drainage options. She noted that Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) had sponsored a second meeting for stakeholders (on April 27) to give additional information about the options and provided a tour to show examples of the options being considered.

#### ***Meeting Summary***

The Chair asked the Group if there were comments on the draft summary from the April 20 Stakeholders Group meeting. Barbara Maxwell requested that the minutes be revised to reflect the fact that she had handed out copies of the transportation-related policies from the Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan at the meeting since the scope of work for the Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan or CTIP is to implement the goals in the Plan.

The Group approved the summary as amended. (The revised summary was to be posted on the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) web page devoted to Northgate's revitalization.)

### **Public Comment Approaches Discussion**

Vicki King of Triangle Associates summarized two options, with a few variations, for handling public comment at Group meetings. These options grew out of telephone conversations with Group members following the April 20 meeting. The options were as follows:

1. Keep the comment period at the end of the meeting; ask that people sign up to speak in advance; give speakers up to three minutes each.
2. Add more opportunities for public comment -- at the beginning, in the middle of the meeting or before the Group takes an action.

Following a brief discussion on the options, the Group voted to adopt option #1. Group members encouraged those who had a representative on the Group to work through that person. In addition, they invited the public to send written comments and to attend Group-sponsored community forums.

### **Northgate South Lot Open Space and Natural Drainage Options**

#### ***Decision Making Input, Chuck Clarke***

Chuck Clarke, Director of SPU, explained that the Department was tasked with making a recommendation to the Mayor by May 21 and the Mayor is scheduled to make his recommendation to the City Council in June. He said he would be able to tell the Group at its May 20 meeting what his recommendation to the Mayor would be. In developing SPU's recommendation, he said the Department would look at all the information, review the values and input from the Stakeholders Group, and consider the costs. He said that SPU thought the hybrid and natural drainage options were best and was looking at them in detail. He said the Department's goal was to return the best long-term value for the investment. To help SPU in its decision-making, he said it would be helpful to know what kinds of things Group members valued. What did they see as adding value to the community? Would the Group prefer to have water in the creek 12 months of the year or intermittently (after a rain)? Were some alternatives more attractive than others? If so, why? Did any alternative make more sense than the others? If so, for what reasons? With input from Group members on those questions, SPU would apply the "prudent person rule," and develop its recommendation to the Mayor.

#### ***SPU Responses to April 20 Questions and Comments***

Miranda Maupin of SPU presented responses to the specific questions and comments posed in the April 20<sup>th</sup> Stakeholders Group meeting. [See handout materials for complete summary.]

***Open Space and Drainage Design Options, Chris Woelfel and Peggy Gaynor***

Chris Woelfel and Peggy Gaynor presented a descriptive overview and provided graphic renditions of the three drainage options. Chris focused on the Natural System option. She explained that the use of bioswales (vegetation within the ditch or swale) was an effective way to filter out pollutants; particularly the more heavily polluted water that comes from flashy flows. In response to a comment that sedges needed to have water all year round to grow, Chris said that irrigation could be included in the design in the first three years, but the expectation was that it would not be needed once the plants had established themselves because the design assumed a native plant population and amended soil. It was requested that the comparison of options include the cost of irrigation, to make it fair and accurate.

Peggy Gaynor, an independent consultant designer, who has been working on options for Thornton Creek since 2000 and served on SPU's technical team for Northgate, described the differences among all three options but focused most of her remarks on the hybrid and daylight options. She noted that the daylighting option started about 25ft down. The flow rates would vary from 1 cfs to more than 100 cfs and would require a series of stepped channels and flood plains to accommodate stormwater from major storms. She explained that the hybrid system was developed to address the situation of a very small stream that gets huge quantities of stormwater during storms. It would retain water through various mechanisms, increase the slope to provide for year-round flow, and provide water-quality benefits. She referred to it as "value-added daylighting."

SPU brought to the meeting graphic renderings of the drainage options developed by a graduate student at the University of Washington in response to the Group's request on April 20 for visuals that would give a sense of how the different options might look.

***Group Discussion***

The Group discussed the South Lot options in greater detail and made the following points:

- It is more important to focus on what you are trying to accomplish with the treatment and on the benefits we get (safety, better plant life, better water quality) than how deep an option is.
- The graphic rendering makes the hybrid look more appealing aesthetically than expected. The hybrid should meet the safety and security concerns because of the eyes from the street, from the sidewalk and from residential development.
- In response to a question about whether or not the cost of pedestrian bridges was included in the comparison, Miranda Maupin indicated that the cost of pedestrian access was factored into the costs.
- Another question asked about the safety and possible liability of an 18' slope with no railings. In response, it was pointed out that the slopes were generally not steep; where they might be, soil-wrapped walls could be used.
- A question was asked about how the options compared with treatments at the intersection of 120<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave NW. In response, it was indicated that both the hybrid and natural drainage system would be similar. The hybrid could be a bit deeper, but it could be terraced back.

- In response to a question about the difference in comparing results per acre v. per year, it was explained that one shows which option is the most efficient while the other shows which one removes the most pollutants in aggregate. The natural drainage is more efficient at removing sediment, but the hybrid deals with higher flows better.
- A question was raised about how deep and steep the hybrid option is relative to the daylighting option. It was explained that there are different ways to measure depth.
- With respect to year-round flow v. intermittent, a member said that moving water was a benefit, especially in dryer months. He suggested a “wishing well” be included.
- A question was raised about whether or not the options would address the rapid snowmelt that occasionally comes from the area above 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. It was explained that that snowmelt does not drain to this project. If it were to, in the natural drainage system, the heavy flow would go to the pipe. The hybrid siphons off the small storms; it is not intended to handle the largest storms.

The Group made the following observations with regard to values of importance in a selected option:

- **Moving Water-** Year round moving water is an important feature for an option.
- **Aesthetics-** Overall, the Group identified the need to have a visually pleasing site and year-round water flow would assist.
- **Safety-** The Group identified the need to have the design be “safe” with view lines from surrounding areas.
- **Pedestrian Movement-** The Group indicated the importance of pedestrian flow for the open space to the mall and surrounding office and residential areas.

The Chair asked if people would please indicate their current preferences among the options in a straw poll. The facilitation team handed out forms for them to mark their preferences, collected the results and reported them as follows:

- Daylighting - 1
- Natural Drainage - 2
- Hybrid - 17
- Abstention- 1

Reflecting on what he had heard from the stakeholders, Chuck Clarke indicated that he had heard Group members say that they preferred shallower to deeper (depth of the drainage design from the street) and that they preferred water year-round rather than on an intermittent basis. He noted that the Group indicated a strong preference for the Hybrid option. He said that input was very valuable and that SPU would build the input into its discussions.

In response to a request, the Group took a short break.

## **King County Transit Oriented Development**

Matt Aho, from King County Transit Oriented Development (TOD), provided background information and updates on the County's perspectives concerning regional transit facilities and opportunities at Northgate. Matt reminded the Group that the County owns property on the western half of the South Lot. (The Lorig proposal relates to the eastern part of South Lot. Northgate is one of the County's key transit areas, providing connections to downtown and to the region. The County is continuing to work with Lorig and the City to improve pedestrian access and connections to this area, to ensure that all developments are the best possible.

Specific goals and actions include the following:

- 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. Pedestrian Access improvements are going forward, with grant funding
- Ongoing discussions with Lorig on shared parking and overall coordination because the County wants to see the Lorig development succeed to support the County's transit.
- Two recent grant proposals by King County for improvements on 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave., especially for pedestrian improvements to connect to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave transit center and general signage upgrades.
- Pedestrian and bicycle access coupled with a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program, and an aggressive Park & Ride approach that will have parking stalls in use 24 hours per day (shared with residential use)
- Obtaining funding in the future for a Park & Ride garage through the Regional Transportation Investment D?? (RTID) process, which is in the process of developing a package of projects.
- Recently-developed visuals showing the Transit Center, the Monorail, and Sound Transit's Light Rail, all converging at Northgate to convey the transit-oriented vision.
- Reviewing phasing opportunities with the consulting team with the hope of accomplishing goals incrementally over time and continuing to incorporate RTID funding.
- King County is also interested in sustainable development: retaining stormwater on site and treating it and the possible use of Ecoroofs.

In response to a question about shared parking with the Lorig development, Matt indicated that a portion of Park & Ride stalls could be targeted for Lorig users in the evening and on weekends. It would require a management approach.

One member indicated a fear that Northgate would become one big parking lot. At the same time, she noted, people would still have to be able to arrive and to leave. She asked if anyone were paying attention to how that would happen? She also asked if those people would actually shop at Northgate, not just come and go. In response, Matt indicated that TOD was involved with CTIP and modeling transportation impacts. He said that King County currently has 1400 stalls on four lots. If they could be consolidated into a transit center garage, it would free up land for other uses. He also indicated that King County

Transit would like to see people walking and using their bicycles to get to the transit center, not just arriving in automobiles.

In response to a question about how pedestrians could safely go from the mall to the transit center, Matt indicated that a signal was going to be installed on 103<sup>rd</sup> to help pedestrians make that connection safely.

In response to a question about the possible timeframe for these improvements, Matt indicated that it would depend on market conditions. He said that King County's Dept. of Transportation does not develop land; it needs a private sector partner to do this. The County needs RTID funding to build a transit garage. He also indicated that the County was discussing an equity swap with the Washington State Dept. of Transportation to try to get ownership of the adjacent parcel on the South Lot; this ownership would be necessary for development. He said phasing would be critical to implementation and what would happen first remained to be determined. He said it was important to come up with the right program.

Another member reminded King County of her expectation that the County should be planning to "offload" the Park & Ride lot at 112<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Ave to be converted into a park.

Ron briefly introduced King County Councilmember Bob Ferguson (2<sup>nd</sup> District) who, in turn, introduced his aide, Sally Clark, who has attended Stakeholders Group meetings.

At this point, a member made a point of order. He wanted it noted that the Lorig South Lot Development, which he saw as one of two topics being fast-tracked and rushed to an early decision, had not been discussed or deliberated at any meeting despite being listed on the Group's workplan for discussion on April 20 and May 11. He noted that it had not been mentioned at any meeting except for a brief presentation at the Group's introductory meeting, for which stakeholders were provided no information in advance. Moreover, the deadline for advice from the Group was continually moved forward, first from late June, to June 3, and then to May 20. He wanted it noted that the Group had had no discussion or deliberation of the Lorig South Lot Development even though the schedule indicated it would be discussed at three meetings before the Group offered advice to the City on the Lorig South Lot Development.

The Chair noted the member's comment. A member of the facilitation team indicated that a revised workplan and schedule would be brought to the May 20 meeting.

### **Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan (CTIP)**

Tony Mazella, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), presented the Department's responses to questions from the April 20<sup>th</sup> meeting and reviewed the complete list of themes that emerged from the CTIP homework assignment. [See handout materials for additional information.] Highlights included the following:

- Safety concerns – for all modes -- were a high priority.
- All modes are important.
- Changes that push traffic onto neighborhood streets are not desired.
- Keep the arterials moving so traffic doesn't flow onto residential streets.
- The pedestrian system needs work; deficiencies in the system should be addressed.
- There were differences of opinion on how improvements should be paid for.

A member requested that the Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan (NACP) be integrated into the draft scope of work. (Jackie Kirn pointed out that the NACP is available on-line at the DPD site and in local libraries.) Ms. Kirn also referenced a letter to the Group from City Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck about how to integrate the NACP into the city's formal neighborhood planning process.

Another member requested more time for Group discussion on transportation issues, to improve the Group's knowledge and understanding.

### **5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Streetscape Update**

Teresa Platt provided a brief update on the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue streetscape project. She announced that after a long planning process (from 2001-2002) the City was moving into Phase 1 of implementation (Northgate Way to 105<sup>th</sup>). She reported that the City has \$2 million of the estimated \$5 million needed to complete the project. Some of the upcoming improvements will include wider sidewalks, pedestrian promenade and walkways, street trees in the medians, and pedestrian lighting. Currently designers are moving plans from 30% to 60%, which involves production of final layouts and mockups. The plan is to have the 60% design layout ready to show the community in June, and construction would be coordinated with the community center to begin in the summer of 2005. Teresa noted that SDOT discussions with King County Transit were underway concerning the best location for a bus stop in the project area; the agencies were not yet in agreement on the location.

### **Community Forum Approach Update**

The Chair noted that the Community Forum on May 13<sup>th</sup> would be the Groups' opportunity to run their own meeting and get feedback from the public. He invited facilitation team member Vicki King to give a brief recap of the meeting format that was agreed to at the April 20 Stakeholders Group meeting. The format includes an Open House for the first hour, followed by three compartmentalized Stakeholder panel presentations and public comment periods. [See handout materials for additional information.] A member of each of the Stakeholder panels was given the opportunity to describe their approach for informing the public about their topic. [Panel members had talked before the meeting began their approach in greater detail prior to the start of the session.] David Harrison urged the panels to indicate that the Group is at different stages on these issues, to tell meeting participants where the Group is in its deliberative process on each issue (farthest on open space and drainage and less far on CTIP and the Lorig proposal), and to indicate that the Group hopes to finalize its advice on open space and drainage on May 20<sup>th</sup>.

The following questions were posed during the Community Forum discussion period:

*Question:* Will there be food provided at the meeting?

*Response (Mark Troxel)* The City was planning on providing coffee and cookies. (After being encouraged to provide food since the meeting is over the dinner hour), he said he would look into the possibility of adding food.

*Question:* Is there an opportunity for interest groups to have any tables or displays available at the Forum?

*Response: (Mark Troxel)* There are currently eight displays plus a Department of Neighborhoods table. There is not space to add additional group tables at this time, but there might be space available in the hallway for literature.

*Comment:* Perhaps small groups could be featured at upcoming forums.

*Question:* What types of marketing strategies were used to inform the public? How many people are expected to attend?

*Response:* There were hundreds of e-mails sent to various listserves in the area. In addition, several thousand pre-recorded calls were made to people throughout the Northgate area. No RSVP was required, but over 200 people are anticipated to attend.

All Stakeholders were encouraged to attend the upcoming Forum to hear public comments.

### **Stakeholders Group Advice Approach & Work Plan for Advice**

David Harrison, facilitation team, reviewed the proposed process and format for how the Group will provide its advice to the Mayor and the City Council. He asked everyone to review the proposed draft process. [See handout materials for additional information.] He mentioned that if the Group was in agreement, the facilitation team could craft a draft version of advice based on the stakeholder discussions to date and the input from the Community Forum. An alternative to this approach would be for the Group to create a subcommittee to draft an approach for the Group to review. Janet Way and Shawn Olesen offered to work with Mr. Harrison to draft the advice on South Lot open space and drainage options. In response to concerns expressed by the Group about the short timeline for reviewing, revising and finalizing advice, it was decided that a draft version of the advice would be sent to Group members to review on Monday, May 17.

Alice Shorett proposed that the Group revisit the work plan for advice on issues. She said the facilitation team will bring a revised schedule and work plan for advice for discussion at the May 20 Stakeholder Group meeting.

### **Chair and Vice-Chair Election Results**



Alice Shorett announced the results of the election by written ballot that was distributed at the beginning of the meeting. As a result of the vote, Ron LaFayette was elected Chair and Michelle Rupp was elected Vice-Chair.

## **Public Comment**

Ron LaFayette opened the floor for public comment, calling on individuals who had signed up to speak.

*Comment:* Joel Tufel commented that the pace of the meetings was unreasonable and requested additional consideration of public input. He noted that he sent several thoughtful questions to SPU that had not been answered in advance of the May 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. Joel also expressed concern about the importance of testing the pipe and the weir to make sure that neither would cause flooding in the event of blockage.

*Comment:* Jan Brucker congratulated the team who prepared the visual renderings of the proposed drainage options. She liked the fact that the renderings showed how the pedestrian connections work and said that she would like to see similar pedestrian-oriented values incorporated into the transportation and development components. She also emphasized her desire to find a way to get more pedestrians from the west side of the freeway across the freeway and asked how Westside neighborhoods could connect without cars.

*Comment:* Renee Barton said that she was thrilled that 18 of the representatives had indicated they wanted to have water year round – the “environmental choice.” As a resident who lives downstream in the Meadowbrook area, she said that anything that improves water quality would benefit the creek. She encouraged *all* Stakeholder Members to attend the upcoming Community Forum on May 13<sup>th</sup>.

*Comment:* Keith Huller noted that Thornton Creek runs downstream into the Meadowbrook area. He said that if none of the current Stakeholders were representative of this area, he wanted to nominate the previous speaker, Renee Barton, his wife, to serve. He also asked for clarification on the Group’s process for presenting advice to the Mayor and the City Council.

*Comment:* Pam Johnson commented that the Stakeholders Group had been learning about the issues fairly intensively, but that it sounded like members still needed additional information to make an informed decision. She expressed concern that the public who would be attending the upcoming Community Forum might not be able to do the best job possible of providing information to the public. She also asked if the Stakeholder presenters would be given access to the same materials the City provided, if there was a format laid out for them to follow, and if they would be presenting the options from this individual perspectives or as spokesmen for the Group.

*Response:* Mark Troxel indicated that several of the panelists had already made requests for materials for their presentations and the City would be happy to provide them.

*Comment:* Skip Knox asked the Group if anyone lived near Thornton Creek [Three Group members indicated that they did]. He noted that the City is planning to spend a lot of money to protect the fragile ecosystem of Thornton Creek, and that those people who live on or near it have the most knowledge about it. He felt that the Group should expand its composition of Stakeholders to include a property owner along the creek. He also made the following points:

- Flat drawings [renditions] are great, but they don't give the representation that a 3-dimensional model mock-up would; he urged the Group to request a 3-D model.
- The Stakeholder Group presents a very valuable opportunity to reconnect a variety of neighbors that have been disconnected from the area.
- He urged the Group to think of the long-term legacy that it will be creating.
- He congratulated the people that put the Group together. He noted that there had been a lot of fighting in the past, and that it was great to see a number of these groups together at one table.

## Closing

Ron LaFayette asked the Group to review the letter from Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck that was enclosed in the information packets. He called on Norm Schwab of the City Council central staff to explain the intent and scope of the letter. Mr. Schwab said that the Council was looking to get public input on the incorporation of relevant policies from the Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan into the City's comprehensive plan as part of the City's annual amendment process. Although this was an optional request for the Group to add to its agenda, Norm noted that the input provided would be very helpful to the City Council.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:00 pm.

## Meeting Attendance

Representatives and Alternates of the **Northgate Stakeholders Group** in attendance were:

**King County Metro:** Rep. Ron Posthuma

**Simon Properties:** Rep. Gary Weber, Alt. Sam Stalin

**Maple Leaf Community Council:** Alt. Mel Vannice

**Licton Springs Community Council:** Rep. Jerry Owens

**Haller Lake Community Council:** Rep. Velva Maye

**Pinehurst Community Council:** Rep. Lorna Mrachek

**Victory Heights Community Council:** Rep. Brad Cummings, Alt. Molly Burke

**Northgate Chamber of Commerce:** Alt. Scott Greer

**Thornton Creek Alliance:** Rep. John Lombard, Alt. Erik Davido

**Thornton Creek Legal Defense Fund:** Rep. Janet Way, Alt. Bob Vreeland

**North Seattle Community College:** Rep. Ronald H. LaFayette, Alt. Bruce Kieser

**Northwest Hospital:** Alt. Rose Dammrose

**Owners of Three or More Acres:** Rep. Kevin Wallace

**Senior Housing:** Rep. Jeanne Hayden, Alt. Sandra Morgan

**Renters/Condominium Owners:** Rep. Debra Fulton, Alt. Brad Mason

**Multi-family Housing Developers:** Rep. Colleen Mills

**Businesses Inside the Mall:**

**Businesses Outside the Mall:** Rep. Michelle Rupp

**Youth:** Rep. Diana Medina, Alt. Alexia Dorsch

**Labor:** Rep. Brad Larrsen

**At-large:** Rep. Shawn Olesen, Alt. Barbara Maxwell

**At-large:** Rep. Marilyn Firlotte

Members of the Triangle Associates facilitation team included: Alice Shorett, David Harrison, Vicki King, and Darcie Garland-Renn.